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SUBJECT: DARFUR: JUNE 23/25 MEETINGS WITH JEM AND  
ABDULWAHID EL-NUR

Classified By: Acting Political Minister-Counselor Andrew Young, 1.4 (b /d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: Darfur Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) representatives said on June 23 that JEM was absorbing other Darfur rebel elements and was becoming the strongest Darfur group best able to represent Darfur's interests. JEM was continuing to seek Khartoum's implementation of the February 17, 2009, Declaration of Intentions, which could lead to a cessation of hostilities, further peace talks, and a cease fire; Khartoum was not showing any inclination to take these steps. The ICC issue and resulting expulsion of NGOs from Darfur had made things worse in Darfur. JEM leader Khalil Ibrahim is considering travel to the U.S. soon. In a separate June 25 meeting, Abdulwahid el-Nur was critical of SE Gration's statements on Sudan and genocide. He reiterated that he would not participate in peace talks until the people of Darfur were secure and no longer subject to violence. He believed that Qatar was incapable of serving as an honest broker because of what he considered Qatar's long-standing pro-Khartoum stance. END SUMMARY.

#### MEETING WITH JEM

¶2. (C) A six-person delegation of JEM members met with acting AF-watcher on June 23. The group consisted of Ahmed Adam Bakhiet (JEM Deputy Leader), Abubaker Hamid (JEM Administrative and Organizational Affairs), Haroun Abdulhameed (JEM Political Advisor), Khattab Adam Widah (JEM Media Advisor), Sief El Dawla (Secretary of External Offices), and El Sadig Yousif (JEM Representative in France). Abubaker Hamid did most of the talking although the others contributed as well.

¶3. (C) The JEM delegation claimed that JEM was becoming stronger and was continuing to absorb other Darfur rebel groups, including 16 recent groups that had either joined JEM or were in the process of doing so. These were: SLM Peace Wing (moving away from SLM-Minnawi); SLM-Nur (North Darfur Sector); Revolutionary Forces Front; SLM-Field Leadership of Adam Ali Shogar; SLM-Field Leadership of Dafalla Albakheit; SLM-Unity Sulaiman Jamous; SLM-Unity Abdel Rahman Ibrahim Banat; SLM-Main Line Mansour Arabab; Numour Al-Sudan Movement Bahr Aldin Adam Karama; Revolutionary Forces Front Farah Al-Amin Rizgalla; Reform and Development Front Iddal Fursan; Kordofan Association for Development; Movement of the Aggrieved Soldier Al-Doush; Support of Truth Tulus; Movement of Ribat National Army Bilbil; and Darfur Rasd and Mutabaa Movement Mohamed Rudi Adam and Ahmet Hajja.

¶4. (C) The JEM members said that JEM was clearly becoming the dominant Darfur movement, and that JEM should be viewed as the "lead voice" on Darfur, which would put to rest Khartoum's claim that the Darfur factions were too numerous and disunited, making it hard for Khartoum to know with whom it should talk. "It is clear that they will have to talk to

JEM," the JEM group said. They said that there were a number of other Darfur "leaders" but that they represented few Darfuris and were weak. They notably focused on Abdulwahid el-Nur, claiming that he had become a media darling but commanded only a small, ineffectual following in Darfur, with many previously senior associates abandoning him and joining JEM.

15. (C) The JEM representatives spent considerable time condemning Khartoum and its failure to improve conditions in Darfur and elsewhere throughout Sudan, live up to prior commitments (including the CPA), cooperate with the international community, or do anything else other than concentrate on its exclusive retention of power in Sudan. The JEM members said that JEM wanted Khartoum to implement the February 17, 2009, Declaration of Intentions both sides had signed. Instead, Khartoum wanted a cease fire to take place first. JEM wanted implementation of the Declaration, followed by a cessation of hostilities, further talks on ironing out details, and then a cease fire, but only to conclude rather than initiate the process. On the prisoner exchange issue, the JEM members said that JEM had released, in two batches, some 80 prisoners, but that Khartoum, in an act of bad faith, did not release real fighters but instead civilians "who they rounded up and who they tried to make us believe were fighters."

16. (C) Instead of offering cooperation, Khartoum was obsessed with the ICC issue and was hardening its positions on all fronts, which included the expulsion of the NGOs. Conditions in Darfur were worsening, the JEM leaders said. They accused Khartoum of playing a perverse psychological

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game -- "They want to make conditions in Darfur so bad that the people of Darfur will beg the international community to call off the ICC indictments so that life there can improve."

The JEM leaders said that the Bashir regime had no friends in Sudan and would face Darfur-like problems in all parts of the country, with the South being the most obvious example. "You have a minority group trying to exert exclusive control over a country made of many different peoples. Khartoum doesn't care about them and will do whatever it has to do to keep power in the hands of this small minority."

17. (C) Throughout the meeting, the JEM members expressed appreciation for the U.S. engagement in Sudan and did not raise the recent debate over "genocide and Sudan." They mentioned that JEM leader Khalil Ibrahim was considering a visit to the U.S. soon, but did not elaborate and did not ask our help in facilitating his travel. We will scan and e-mail a paper the JEM group left with us.

ABDULWAHID EL-NUR

18. (C) Abdulwahid el-Nur (AW) offered a distinctly different view when we met with him on June 25 to convey SE Gration's letter thanking him for meeting during the SE's May visit to Paris. AW forcefully expressed his "strong disappointment" with SE Gration and his recent comments about Sudan and genocide. We noted that the USG had clarified the USG position on genocide in Sudan, but AW brushed that aside, saying that the damage had already been done, with Khartoum clearly feeling that the USG's position had softened and might even be viewed as supportive of the regime. AW said that this would only embolden Khartoum and lead it to treat its critics and those it was oppressing with even more disdain and disregard. He asked repeatedly that we "tell Washington exactly what I think about this."

19. (C) Concerning participation in the peace process, AW repeated what he has told us several times before -- that he would not participate so long as there was no security for the people of Darfur, which included disarming the Janjaweed and allowing refugees and IDPs to return to their homes safely and with no conditions attached. Unless this

happened, he said, "how could anyone expect that I would go talk to these murderers and rapists? They have to stop first." AW said that he did not believe that Qatar could serve as an honest broker in hosting the Doha talks. "They have never agreed to anything critical of Khartoum and they were among the group of African and Arab countries that called for suspending the ICC indictments right after they were issued. How can you expect them to have as a priority the interests of the people of Sudan? They are only interested in finding an easy way out for Bashir and his people." AW said several times that "I'm not taking the positions I'm taking because I'm looking for some kind of job down the road, but rather because I want to see my people end their suffering."

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